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**Living snow fence to be installed on State Route 25 in Lincoln County**

One of the first living snow fences for the State of Washington is being planted in Lincoln County off Highway 25 about 14 miles north of Davenport. The planting will get underway on Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. The work is being coordinated by the US Department of Agriculture, National Resources Conservation Service. The Washington State Department of Transportation/Davenport Maintenance office had identified this site as having a snowdrift problem making it a good candidate for this effort.

Blowing and drifting snow can create hazardous road conditions and increase road maintenance costs. Small segments of roadways exposed to drifting snow can cause miles of roadways to be closed. Snow fences are a proven means for reducing the impact of blowing and drifting snow. These fences are commonly made of slatted or picket wood material. They cause a tornado like effect that alters wind speed and direction, allowing the snow to settle out. Living snow fences are densely planted windbreaks designed and planted to reduce blowing and drifting snow. The living snow fence, made of live plant materials such as grasses, shrubs and trees, is a more effective method of reducing snow drifts. All types of snow fences need to be designed allowing snow to settle without drifting on the road.

The snow fence will be 800 feet long and consist of two twin staggered rows of Rocky Mountain juniper trees. The trees will grow through a fabric mulch material which will control weeds and keep extra moisture in the ground. Bunch grass will be planted between the rows to prevent the spread of weeds. The first row will be planted 100 feet from the road, the second 142 feet. Rocky Mountain juniper trees with good site preparation will grow one foot a year. The fence should be fully effective in 5 to 7 years. When the project is completed over 500 trees will be planted, nurtured and maintained creating a living snow fence.

The owner of the property, Bill Reinbold, is providing half an acre of his wheat field to benefit travelers on the highway. Subsequently, as a result of the snow fence, more snow will be deposited on his property increasing moisture in the ground. Mr. Reinbold will water and maintain the snow fence.

The living snow fence is a cooperative project with the USDA National Agroforestry Center and Natural Resources Conservation Service; Lincoln County Conservation District; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

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